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United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme carried out by the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The Programme continues to publish print and electronic versions of the two-part *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, which are available from the website of the Office (www.un.org/disarmament). The website is the main means of disseminating information. It is an important repository of information where Member States, conference participants, non-governmental organizations and the general public can access daily updates of documents and statements, including video messages. The Office continues to facilitate the participation of civil society in disarmament-related meetings and conferences and collaborate closely with non-governmental organizations. The present report also provides details on the many contributions made by the Department of Public Information in support of the work of the Organization on disarmament.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/74, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Assembly at its seventy-third session a report covering both the implementation of the activities of the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme by the United Nations system during the previous two years and the activities of the Programme contemplated for the following two years. The Programme is administered by the Office for Disarmament Affairs, in close collaboration with the Department of Public Information, in particular on information campaigns focused on major disarmament-related events and conferences.

2. The objectives of the Programme reflect the overall orientation of the Office, guided by the priorities of Member States, as set out in the resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly.

3. The High Representative for Disarmament Affairs has prioritized the advocacy of disarmament and non-proliferation issues with Member States and civil society, including through the recognition of the vital contributions of the media, think tanks and civil society organizations in frequent and in-depth interactions with them.

4. Of particular note was the announcement of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament, as set out in the document entitled "Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament", in which disarmament is integrated into the priorities of the whole United Nations system. The agenda for disarmament addresses the subjects of weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and future technologies and weapons systems. It presents a framework based on concrete, practical actions for creating new partnerships and greater collaboration between the United Nations, Governments, civil society, the private sector and other actors.

5. In the area of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, especially nuclear weapons, priority was accorded to commemorating both the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August) and the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September); the tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, held in New York on 20 September 2017; and the first and second sessions of the preparatory committee of the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held at Geneva from 23 April to 4 May 2018.

6. In the area of conventional weapons, focus was accorded to the Third United Nations Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in New York from 18 to 29 June 2018, at which progress made in the implementation of the International Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons was also reviewed.

7. Funding for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme continues to be derived from the regular budget and extrabudgetary resources, in particular the voluntary trust fund for the Programme. The status of the trust fund as at 31 December 2017 is contained in the annex to the present report. During the reporting period, the trust fund continued to benefit from the generosity of Member States and private donors. The Office is grateful for the generous donations and support it has received.

II. Information resources

A. Publication programme

8. The *United Nations Disarmament Yearbook*, the flagship publication of the Office, was offered to all United Nations delegations in two parts. Part I, on resolutions and decisions, was disseminated during the proceedings of the Disarmament Commission and part II, on the major disarmament issues of the preceding year, was distributed to all delegations participating in the work of the First Committee.

9. The Occasional Papers series helps in the dissemination of the expert input from individuals, panels and seminars sponsored by the Office. The following were disseminated free of charge and posted on the website of the Office during the reporting period:

- Occasional Paper No. 28, October 2016, entitled *Rethinking General and Complete Disarmament in the Twenty-first Century*,[1] featured examinations of historic, strategic, humanitarian and economic aspects of general and complete disarmament by leading scholars, diplomats and activists. Their analyses elaborated and elevated the case for prohibiting conventional weapons systems as well as nuclear weapons.
- Occasional Paper No. 29, October 2016, entitled *Bringing Democracy to Disarmament: A Historical Perspective on the Special Sessions of the General Assembly Devoted to Disarmament*,[2] in which the previous three special sessions on disarmament, held in 1978, 1982 and 1988, and the efforts to convene a fourth are considered. Member States have used such special sessions to help to develop or strengthen global norms in the field of disarmament.
- Occasional Paper No. 30, November 2017, entitled *Perspectives on Lethal Autonomous Weapon Systems*,[3] in which the issue is considered from five different disciplinary viewpoints, was published ahead of the first meeting of the Group of Governmental Experts of the High Contracting Parties to the Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects. The Group is mandated to examine issues related to emerging technologies in the area of lethal autonomous weapon systems in the context of the objectives and purposes of the Convention.
- Occasional Paper No. 31, December 2017, entitled *Celebrating 15 Years of Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education*,[4] contained an examination of the topic, in commemoration of the fifteenth anniversary of the United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation education (A/57/124), transmitted to the General Assembly in 2002.

10. The Office continued to produce UNODA Update (https://www.un.org/disarmament/update/), an e-publication highlighting recent activities of various disarmament forums and related online materials issued by the Office and others.

11. The Office publishes the *Civil Society and Disarmament* series, in the context of General Assembly resolutions on the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme and the 2002 United Nations study on disarmament and non-proliferation

[1] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IX.8.
[2] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.16.IX.9.
[3] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.17.IX.6.
[4] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.IX.4.

education. The series provides a forum for members of civil society to share their views and to further an informed debate on topical issues relating to disarmament, arms limitation and security. The following publications were issued during the reporting period:

- *Civil Society Engagement in Disarmament Processes: The Case for a Nuclear Weapons Ban*.[5] The movement to enact a treaty to ban nuclear weapons reframed the focus of nuclear weapons from defence strategies to their humanitarian and environmental consequences. This edition presents the case that a nuclear-weapons-ban treaty is a vital step in the ultimate abolition of nuclear weapons.

- *Voluntary, Non-Binding Norms for Responsible State Behaviour in the Use of Information and Communications Technology: A Commentary*.[6] This publication contains commentary on the recommendations for voluntary, non-binding norms of responsible State behaviour, made by the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts on Developments in the Field of Information and Telecommunications in the Context of International Security (see A/70/174). Responding to an open call for comments, scholars, experts and enthusiasts submitted recommendations, comments and guidance for understanding and interpreting the Group's recommendations.

12. The Office continued to publish its study series, which highlights reports of various groups of governmental experts. In December 2017, it published study series No. 36, entitled *The Global Reported Arms Trade — Transparency in Armaments through the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms: A Guide to Assist National Points of Contact in Submitting Their National Reports*,[7] commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Register.

13. The 2015/16 and 2016/17 editions of *Programmes Financed from Voluntary Contributions* were issued in October 2016 and October 2017, respectively. The widely disseminated annual report illustrates how the Office has achieved specific results through donor partnerships, making them an essential part of attaining important disarmament goals.

14. In June 2017, the information booklet entitled *The Biological Weapons Convention: An Introduction* was issued. Produced in cooperation with the Implementation Support Unit of the Convention and with financial assistance from the European Union, the publication describes in easily understandable terms the importance and benefits of the Convention.

15. In August 2017, the Office disseminated the booklet entitled *Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons: Signature and Ratification*, which describes the procedures for States to sign, ratify, accept, approve or accede to the Treaty. It is available in English and French.

16. In October 2017, the Office released the fourth edition of *Disarmament: A Basic Guide*, a publication intended to promote public understanding and support of multilateral action in the field of disarmament and arms limitation. The fourth edition includes updated figures, tables and information on the status of treaties; new analysis of key developments since 2012; discussion of the Arms Trade Treaty and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons; and a new chapter on emerging threats from cyberweaponry, unmanned combat aerial vehicles and lethal autonomous weapons systems.

[5] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.17.IX.2.
[6] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.IX.3.
[7] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.18.IX.2.

17. In January 2018, the Office and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations jointly published *Effective Weapons and Ammunition Management in a Changing Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Context: A Handbook for United Nations DDR Practitioners*. The *Handbook* aims at equipping those working in the fields of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration with practical resources for designing effective weapons and ammunition management operations and other arms control activities, as part of such programmes.

18. On 24 May 2018, at the University of Geneva, the Secretary-General announced his agenda for disarmament, as set out in the Office's publication "Securing Our Common Future: An Agenda for Disarmament". In his agenda for disarmament, the Secretary-General outlines a set of practical measures across the entire range of disarmament issues, including weapons of mass destruction, conventional arms and future weapon technologies and seeks to generate fresh perspectives and to explore areas where serious dialogue is required to bring disarmament back to the heart of common efforts for peace and security.

19. The Office offers on its website a series of concise, two-page fact sheets on various topics within its purview. In 2016 and 2017, 36 fact sheets were updated on a twice-yearly basis. In 2018, an additional fact sheet was added.

B. Website

20. The number of visitors to the website remained high throughout 2016 and 2017, with approximately 1 million total visitors during the period. Website traffic was highest during periods in which disarmament and non-proliferation issues were garnering worldwide attention in news media, such as during the conference leading to the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in 2017 and the announcement of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament in 2018. The period surrounding the meetings of the First Committee continues to be one of the peak months for visitors to the website. Some 75 per cent are directed to the website of the Office by search engines, with the remainder either directly typing the URL or accessing the website via links from other websites and social media.

C. Podcasts

21. Two podcast episodes were made available as part of the *Disarmament Today* series. In 2016, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations, Shorna-Kay Richards, was interviewed in an episode entitled "Gender and disarmament", in which she provided an overview of her experience as a delegate in various disarmament forums. In 2018, in the episode entitled "A discussion on nanotechnology" a researcher and lecturer at the Technical University of Dortmund, Jürgen Altmann, discussed the security implications of potential military applications of nanotechnology.

III. Information activities

A. Conferences, panel discussions and other information activities

22. Through the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific, and in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Office organized the fifteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues, held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, on 17 and 18 November 2016. Participants at the Conference addressed regional

security dialogue and confidence-building, with a focus on nuclear issues concerning the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the implementation of the relevant Security Council sanctions regime. Participants also discussed the nexus between chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear security and cybersecurity, as well as export control regimes.

23. With the Government of Japan, the Office, through the Regional Centre, jointly organized the twenty-sixth United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues, held in Nagasaki, Japan, from 12 to 14 December 2016. At the Conference, held as part of a series of events entitled "International conference in Nagasaki: towards a world free of nuclear weapons", more than 50 participants discussed current approaches to nuclear disarmament; regional security issues, including the roles of nuclear-weapon-free zones; the role of civil society; and the priorities and challenges of the 2020 review cycle of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

24. The sixteenth Republic of Korea-United Nations Joint Conference on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Issues was held in Seoul on 16 and 17 November 2017. Around 40 representatives from Governments, intergovernmental organizations, policy institutes, non-governmental organizations and academia participated in the Conference.

25. The twenty-seventh United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues took place at the International Conference Centre in Hiroshima, Japan, on 29 and 30 November 2017. The event was organized by the Office through the Regional Centre, in cooperation with the Government of Japan and in partnership with the event's hosts, the Prefecture of Hiroshima and the City of Hiroshima. The attendees included more than 50 representatives from Governments and intergovernmental organizations, research institutes, academia and non-governmental organizations.

26. A large number of side events were organized separately and jointly by permanent missions to the United Nations, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the Office during the periods surrounding the following: meetings of the First Committee during the seventy-first and seventy-second sessions of the General Assembly; Third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms and the Preparatory Committee thereof; and first and second sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Additional information on many of these events is available on the website of the Office.

B. Events

27. As part of its outreach efforts, the Office continued to organize and host a range of meetings, seminars and events, including the following:

- On 14 October 2016, the Office, together with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, and the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva hosted an event on the disruptive impact of 3D printing in the creation of weapons, synthetic biology and autonomous weapons systems on international security, including disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as international law.
- On 18 October 2016, the Office and the Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations organized an event on curbing arms flows from the field perspective of Latin America and the Caribbean, held at the offices of the Mission in New York.

- On 20 October 2016, the Office held an event commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

- On 21 October 2016, the Office held an event at Headquarters to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of its Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament.

- In October 2016, the Office screened the following three documentary films on nuclear disarmament that complemented the ongoing work of the First Committee:

  (a) *The Nuclear Requiem*, a narrative film reflecting the ongoing struggle of addressing with the most lethal weapon ever invented, the nuclear weapon;

  (b) *Command and Control*, in which a past accident in the United States involving the explosion of a ballistic missile carrying the most powerful nuclear warhead is examined;

  (c) *Collisions*, a virtual reality film about the Martu tribe, located in the western Australian desert, recounting the first contact between traditional indigenous populations and those conducting nuclear tests in the 1950s.

- On 8 November 2016, at Headquarters, the Office and Hibakusha Stories held the fifth annual "Hiroshima and Nagasaki: creating curriculum for nuclear disarmament" workshop for 29 New York City high school teachers from 13 different schools.

- On 10 December 2016, an event entitled "A conversation with youth", promoted the universalization of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty through an organized partnership between the Office, the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization, the United Nations Information Service in Vienna and the Vienna Centre for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation. The panellists, the Executive Secretary of the Treaty Organization and the High Representative answered questions at the event and through social media.

- On 8 and 9 June 2017 in Mexico City, the Government of Mexico, in cooperation with the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) and supported by the Office and the Government of Germany, organized an industrial outreach conference. Government and industry representatives discussed the value of working together to ensure that materials and technology that could be misused to produce weapons of mass destruction or their means of delivery did not fall into the hands of terrorists and other non-State actors.

- On 8 August 2017, the non-governmental organization committee for peace in Vienna and the Office organized an event in memory of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings. The event was held at the Vienna International Centre and was dedicated to the victims and survivors of the atomic bombings of 1945.

- On 6 October 2017, the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, in collaboration with the Office, organized an event on emerging technologies and their effects on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, held at Headquarters. The event highlighted the dual-use nature of technological innovations and that civilian technologies often carried military implications.

- On 18 October 2017, as a side event to the meetings of the First Committee, the Permanent Mission of Japan partnered with the Office to host a screening of the documentary film entitled *Paper Lanterns*, which is the story of 12 American prisoners of war who were killed in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the Japanese citizen, Shigeaki Mori, who refused to let them be forgotten.

- On 23 October 2017, the Buddhist organization Rissho Kosei-kai partnered with the Office to host a panel discussion entitled "Promoting disarmament and non-proliferation education". The High Representative noted at the event the important role that education played in disarmament and non-proliferation, as it constituted an "indispensable investment" in humanity's future.

28. More information on the aforementioned events and many others held during the period under review is available as part of the UNODA Update series, available from www.un.org/disarmament/update.

C. Exhibitions

29. Exhibitions continued to be an important means of carrying out advocacy and delivering disarmament-related information at conferences and other events.

30. On 3 October 2016, the Office opened a multimedia exhibition at Headquarters in commemoration of the thirtieth anniversary of its Regional Centres for Peace and Disarmament. Through a series of photos, the work and achievements of the three Regional Centres in supporting the disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation initiatives of Member States was highlighted. A separate video featured clips of messages delivered by the Secretary-General, Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas and the Permanent Representatives of China, Germany, Jamaica and Nigeria to the United Nations about the significant achievements of the Centres in their 30-year history.

31. In observance of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2017, the Dag Hammarskjöld Library organized an exhibition of disarmament-related research materials, including e-books, journals and peer-reviewed articles. The exhibition was showcased during a one-day high-level event organized by the Library on issues pertaining to disarmament.

32. To commemorate "Disarmament week", held from 24 to 30 October 2017, the Office supported the installation of the 12 winning entries of the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest in the General Assembly Building as a permanent part of the Headquarters tour route.

33. In partnership with the Permanent Mission of Peru to the United Nations, the Office supported an art exhibition at Headquarters showcasing art by Peruvian visual artist Iván Ciro Palomino, who was the first-prize winner of the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest. The exhibition, entitled "aWAReness", consisted of 16 illustrations that help to raise awareness about the dangers of war and the need for peaceful alternatives.

D. Media

34. From July 2016 to June 2018, the High Representative and senior staff of the Office participated in interviews with several international media outlets, including interviews with the United Nations News Centre.

35. In interviews and press briefings, the High Representative and senior staff of the Office covered topics ranging from the Third Review Conference of the United Nations Programme of Action on Small Arms, nuclear weapons, the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the discussions about artificial intelligence (AI) at the 2017 AI for Good Global Summit.

36. The interviews of the High Representative by the United Nations News Centre included a discussion that focused on her background as a woman who holds a senior-level position at the United Nations. During the exchange, the High Representative touched upon United Nations priority issues related to both women's empowerment and Sustainable Development Goal 16 on the promotion of just, peaceful and inclusive societies. The Centre also conducted an interview with the High Representative via Facebook Live on the day of the opening for signature of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, helping to promote discussion about nuclear non-proliferation and the path to a world free of nuclear weapons.

37. During the reporting period, the Office issued 18 press releases to inform international media and the public about key issues and activities. Press releases are available from: www.un.org/disarmament/pressreleases.

E. Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament

38. A highlight of the reporting period for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme was the promotion of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament.

39. The launch event was broadcast live on UN Web TV and livestreamed through a microsite created by the Office and dedicated specifically to the agenda for disarmament (www.un.org/disarmament/sg-agenda), through which information was provided in all six official languages of the Organization. International media organizations covered the event, including Agence France Presse, CBC, *The New York Times*, Reuters, *The Japan Times* and *The Washington Post*. The Secretary-General engaged with young people during the event by speaking directly to university students and, following the announcement, holding a press conference in which he elaborated further on his agenda for disarmament.

F. Social media, op-eds and youth engagement

40. During the reporting period, the Office used various communication channels for public outreach to young people, including lectures to high school and university students, and published opinion pieces written by the High Representative on how to engage young people, especially young women and girls, in disarmament efforts. One of the published op-eds, entitled "The Women Who Have Shaped Policies on Nuclear Weapons", specifically targeted women and girls and was published in *Teen Vogue* to mark International Women's Day.

41. Another op-ed by the High Representative, published in *Time* magazine, was entitled "Global Military Spending Has Doubled but the World Is No Safer".

42. A third opinion piece, published on the X Prize website, was entitled "Making Sure Artificial Intelligence is Harnessed for Good". The X Prize is a non-profit organization that encourages technological development that could benefit humanity.

G. Activities of the Messenger of Peace on disarmament

43. In close cooperation with the Office, the Department of Public Information takes the lead in supporting the activities of Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas, whose special area of focus is disarmament. During the reporting period, Mr. Douglas undertook a number of activities aimed at young people and the general public to mobilize support for disarmament efforts.

44. On 3 May 2016, Mr. Douglas addressed the United Nations Poster for Peace award ceremony, held at United Nations Headquarters in New York. Garnering over 4,000 entries from 123 countries, the contest aimed at inspiring citizens across the globe to use their artistic talents to promote a world free of nuclear weapons.

45. Mr. Douglas also spoke at an event on 11 May 2016 to mark the launch of a new disarmament section of the book store in the Palais des Nations at the United Nations Office at Geneva and to honour the winners of the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest. The event was co-hosted by the Permanent Mission of the Netherlands to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva and the Office.

46. On 16 September 2016, Mr. Douglas participated in the traditional ceremony marking the International Day of Peace (21 September) at Headquarters, which includes the ringing of the Peace Bell, and moderated the annual student observance of the Day, held in the General Assembly Hall. The event brought together a record 1,800 participants, including students, diplomats, representatives of civil society and the media and celebrities, to discuss the theme: "The Sustainable Development Goals: building blocks for peace".

47. The Messenger of Peace attended the opening of the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, on 26 September 2016, and posted a video with his impressions on his Facebook page. At an interview with the United Nations News Centre, he called upon the international community to collectively reduce the number of nuclear warheads and to facilitate the entry into force of major treaties and protocols to expedite nuclear disarmament.

48. To mark the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, on 26 September 2016, Mr. Douglas posted a video message, which acquired over 170,000 views on Facebook. He also recorded a video message on 22 November and 12 December 2017 on the role of civil society in promoting disarmament and the need to end the use of landmines, cluster munitions and other indiscriminate weapons.

49. Mr. Douglas also posted on his social media accounts in remembrance of the Hiroshima atomic bombings and linking to a United Nations news article by the Secretary-General in which he called for intensified efforts on nuclear disarmament. In December 2017, he posted a video in which he recited article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for the multilingual video collection project to raise awareness of the Declaration and commemorate its seventieth anniversary.

50. Mr. Douglas played a central role in raising funds for a special peace observance in the General Assembly Hall in 2016 to bid farewell to former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and delivered a message on the importance of disarmament for lasting peace.

IV. Cooperation with civil society, especially non-governmental organizations

51. The Office for Disarmament Affairs continues to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations (accreditation and registration) at various disarmament-related conferences, and to coordinate their side events and exhibits, as well as their presentations, in various disarmament meetings.

52. To coordinate participation in major conferences, the Office continues to maintain close contact with two major coalitions of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Reaching Critical Will in the nuclear field and the International Action Network on Small Arms in connection with small arms and light weapons. Those

coalitions are instrumental in facilitating the participation of civil society speakers in intergovernmental meetings on disarmament and non-proliferation.

53. In March 2017, 222 representatives from 58 NGOs participated in the first substantive session of the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, Leading Towards their Total Elimination, held in March 2017. A total of 332 representatives from 41 NGOs participated in the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, held in May 2017, and a total of 380 representatives from 66 NGOs attended the second session of the Committee in April and May 2018. In the area of small arms, 212 representatives from 82 non-governmental organizations participated in the Third Conference to Review Progress Made in the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held in June 2018. Its Preparatory Committee in March 2018 had 93 representatives from 36 NGOs.

V. Activities of the Department of Public Information

54. The Department of Public Information continued to build greater public awareness, understanding and support for the work of the United Nations in the areas of disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related fields by promoting and covering the Organization's conferences, meetings, events and observances, including to local audiences in local languages through the work of the global network of United Nations information centres.

A. Multimedia coverage

55. The Department provided comprehensive support and coverage for the announcement of the Secretary-General's agenda for disarmament, in May 2018. The United Nations information service in Geneva worked with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the University of Geneva to cover the launch by the Secretary-General. It organized the promotion of the event among the Geneva media and set up the audio-visual and print media coverage. It also organized several one-on-one interviews by the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs with international and Swiss media.

56. The Secretary-General's speech was featured across all of the Department's news and feature platforms, in the six official languages as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese. It was showcased as a top story on the United Nations website homepage. Posts on the United Nations social media accounts, including text, images, and videos, reached more than 1.5 million people in the first few days after the launch. During this period, users interacted with the content more than 20,000 times, and viewed the related video clips around 40,000 times.

57. Inspired by the Secretary-General's thematic priority of prevention, the United Nations information service in Vienna, in cooperation with the United Nations Communications Group in Vienna, published a microsite on the contribution of the United Nations family in Vienna on prevention, with on-line stories and concrete examples. One of the sections on the site is titled "Serving Nuclear Non-proliferation and Promoting Disarmament", on the functioning of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO) verification regime to detect nuclear explosions.

58. The Department produced and distributed to partners and the global public information on events such as the Sixth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (6–10 June 2016); the Arms Trade Treaty Second Conference of State Parties (22–26 August), and the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament (14–16 May 2018), among others.

59. The Department's multilingual, multimedia UN News teams produced stories and carried out interviews with senior officials on a range of disarmament-related issues during the reporting period, producing print and online text, radio, photographs and social media. The Department's audio teams also produced stories on the meetings of the General Assembly's First Committee (Disarmament and International Security). These were produced across all official languages, plus Kiswahili and Portuguese.

60. The Department's audio teams also provided coverage of the Science and Technology 2017 Conference, convened in June 2017 in Vienna by the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, which included interviews with United Nations staff on the role of women in disarmament and non-proliferation and covered the annual observances of the International Day against Nuclear Tests, the Day of Remembrance for All Victims of Chemical Warfare and the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.

61. The Department's United Nations News posted more than 325 stories on disarmament-related issues in multiple languages during the reporting period. Several special feature items were produced, including an interview conducted with the United Nations High Representative for Disarmament Affairs in July 2017.

62. Much of the disarmament-related United Nations News coverage in 2018, across the eight languages and different platforms, focused on major international events, including allegations of chemical weapons use in the Syrian Arab Republic (35 posts); Security Council meetings on the incident in Salisbury, United Kingdom (20 posts); and denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula (30 posts), including the April 2018 summit between the leaders of the two sides. The second session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (April) was also covered during the reporting period. In addition, the Secretary-General's key address to the Conference of Disarmament in February 2018 was also highlighted in multiple languages.

63. In 2017, the Department's multilingual news, social media and feature products focused on implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the awarding in October that year of the Nobel Peace Prize to the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, among other issues. News and social media platforms also covered the meetings of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons in Geneva (May 2017); and the Secretary-General's message for the International Day against Nuclear Tests (August 2017).

64. In 2016, United Nations News covered the twentieth anniversary of the CTBTO (2016), the Sixth Meeting of the States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (September 2016), and a feature story with artists participating in the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest (May 2016). Also in 2016, the Department's News teams interviewed Virginia Gamba, then head of the Organisation for Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism. The United Nations News covered, across languages, the Small Arms Survey's Trade Update: Transfers and Transparency, which was launched at United Nations Headquarters in

New York. The Security Council's major open debate on the "Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction", held in July 2016, was covered in the eight languages as well. On other disarmament-related issues, the United Nations News teams covered the 2016 Comprehensive Review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), which aimed to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-State actors.

65. During the reporting period, the Department issued more than 94 detailed summaries in English and French of open intergovernmental meetings relating to disarmament. the Department also issued 116 non-meeting press releases in English on disarmament-related issues and 77 non-meeting press releases in French.

66. During the reporting period, webcast live-streaming coverage by the Department's Webcast Unit included the proceedings of the Disarmament Commission, the Conference on Disarmament, the First Committee and meetings of the Security Council such as those on small arms and light weapons and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Short videos that highlighted the work of the United Nations related to disarmament, with information about the Organization's role, were also featured via webcast.

67. United Nations work on disarmament, arms control, non-proliferation and related fields features prominently in the Yearbook of the United Nations, the annual reference work on the activities of the Organization.

68. The Department maintains a branded website of the 1540 Committee in all six official languages. The Committee was established in 2004 pursuant to resolution 1540 (2004) of the Security Council which affirms that the proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security. In the reporting period the website received over 300,000 page views from users all around the world.

69. The Department also maintains multilingual websites dedicated to the observance of Disarmament Week (24–30 October) and International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons (26 September). These websites serve as effective promotional and educational resources, and have attracted young audiences between the ages of 18 to 34.

70. The Multimedia Resources Unit continued to capture and post materials related to meetings and events focused on disarmament and non-proliferation on the UN Audio-visual Library website. About 150 video and audio records were posted on the Audio-visual Library website during the reporting period. It included Security Council meetings, General Assembly meetings, press conferences and special events, most of which are available in all six languages.

71. UN Photo and the Photo Library captured, catalogued, captioned, and posted on the Library website more than 220 images relating to disarmament issues, including meetings of the General Assembly's First Committee and the Security Council; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Photo Library maintained two spotlight galleries on the UN Photo website highlighting disarmament themes: "Disarmament and the UN" and "Land Mine Issues", and promoted similar themes and content on social media channels including Twitter, Facebook and Flickr.

72. During the reporting period, UN Photo and the Photo Library also provided coverage of the following meetings and special events:

- Conference on Disarmament: second informal Civil Society Forum, June 2016;
- Eighth Ministerial Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, September 2016;

- General Assembly's First Committee General Debate, October 2016 and 2017;
- Disarmament event and high-level panel on the future of disarmament, at New York University, featuring the Secretary-General and other United Nations officials, November 2016;
- A Member State/UNDP-organized brainstorming session on governance, disarmament and sustainable development, January 2017;
- Organizational session for the United Nations Conference to negotiate a legally binding instrument to ban nuclear weapons, February 2017; United Nations Conference meeting and side events, March 2017;
- Round table marking the 10th anniversary of the Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards, June 2017;
- Weapons deactivation in Colombia and the work of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, August 2017;
- Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, September 2017;
- General Assembly commemoration of the International Day for Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, September 2017;
- Conference on Disarmament, Geneva, August 2017, January 2018, February 2018;
- United Nations Disarmament Commission, April 2017; and
- United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament, May 2018.

73. The Department's corporate social media accounts in the six official languages as well as Kiswahili and Portuguese played a key role in disseminating updates on all special observances, op-eds, and work on the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme. The Department covering timely updates on the United Nations disarmament work and created new customized multilingual materials on how the United Nations works every day to promote disarmament activities.

74. The Department worked with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to ensure that appropriate information was shared on social media in a "myths and facts" format, to combat misinformation campaigns on the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects; negotiations on the Arms Trade Treaty; the United Nations Conference on Disarmament; and other events. The Department also used Instagram stories to highlight content on mine action and disarmament targeting youth and mobile audiences.

75. The Department also created an "evergreen" video on the United Nations' disarmament agenda which was popular on Twitter and Facebook, and which will be used in future programmes to raise awareness about the United Nations' work in this area.

B. Public affairs, civil society and non-governmental organizations

United Nations information centres and Visitors Services

76. The Visitors Services in Geneva, Nairobi and Vienna conducted guided tours for more than 388,000 visitors, briefing them on the work of the Organization on

disarmament and non-proliferation. In Geneva, the tours provided information on the Conference on Disarmament, which is based in Geneva.

77. In Nairobi, tours informed visitors on the hazards of land mines and unexploded ordnance on victims and their crippling effect on economies. In Vienna, the tours provided information on the work of the CTBTO and the International Atomic Energy Agency, which are both headquartered there. Exhibitions with artefacts and photos from Hiroshima and Nagasaki were also discussed during the tours in Geneva and Vienna.

78. The Visitors Service in Vienna further organized 180 lectures by speakers from the International Atomic Energy Agency and the CTBTO for an estimated 3,500 participants. Overall, the guided tours programmes, provided an opportunity to directly engage and educate the public on the devastating results of nuclear weapons, mines and small arms as well as highlight the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

79. In collaboration with the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and the City of Hiroshima, team leaders from the Department's Visitors Services in Geneva, New York and Vienna travelled to Hiroshima from 2 to 5 December 2017 to participate in the inaugural "Hiroshima Briefing Programme". The initiative was started to equip Visitors Services' personnel with first-hand knowledge of the destructive effects of nuclear weapons and help them actively promote the United Nations goal of a world without these weapons. Launched on a pilot basis, the programme is expected to continue each year, subject to the availability of funds, which are generously provided by the City of Hiroshima.

80. At the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Visitors Services also disseminated information on disarmament and non-proliferation in a wide range of ways. More than 482,000 visitors participated in guided tours of the Headquarters during the reporting period and were sensitized about the work of the United Nations on disarmament. As part of the visit, tour guides shared information provided by the Office for Disarmament Affairs on spending on arms and how international peace and security is supported by the work of the United Nations on arms regulations and disarmament, while highlighting the adoption and ratification of relevant treaties and conventions. Tour guides regularly receive briefings by disarmament experts to keep them abreast of timely topics and activities on the disarmament agenda, including the work of the relevant bodies and offices involved in disarmament and non-proliferation.

81. Disarmament-related visual displays continued to be an important part of the tour route at the United Nations Headquarters. Small models of pre-assembled air- and sea-based weapons, as well as wall pictures related to the Arms Trade Treaty were added to the disarmament exhibit, helping tour guides explain how the Treaty sets out to regulate the international trade of a wide range of conventional light and heavy weaponry.

82. During the period under review, the Group Programmes Unit in New York conducted numerous briefings covering the topic of disarmament and non-proliferation. The Group Programmes Unit also continued collaborating with the Office for Disarmament Affairs on the Annual Professional Development Day for teachers.

F. Observances of international days

International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action

83. In April 2017, the United Nations information centres in Tehran and Tokyo translated the message of the Secretary-General on the Day into Persian and Japanese respectively, distributing the material across their respective traditional and social media outlets. The United Nations information centre in Manama gave an interview to Al Aan TV of the United Arab Emirates about the Day and the work of the United Nations on mine awareness and assistance in mine action.

84. In May 2017, United Nations information centre in Tehran jointly with a local non-profit Iran Mine Action Centre organized a seminar on assistance in mine action entitled "The mine: an obstacle to development", at which government officials, including the Minister of Defense, spoke on disarmament and non-proliferation issues.

International Day against Nuclear Tests

85. In August 2016, the Department jointly with the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations, observed the International Day Against Nuclear Tests at United Nations Headquarters in New York, focusing on the theme "Strengthening the Global Norms Against Nuclear Tests — CTBT@20". The event, comprising of an informal meeting of the General Assembly and a high-level expert panel, sought to showcase the international efforts of the United Nations and other stakeholders, including Member States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, youth networks and the media, in informing and educating on the importance of the nuclear weapon test ban treaty with the aim of achieving worldwide security. The Department worked with the Office for Disarmament Affairs to promote the Day and the informal meeting of the General Assembly; and updated the website.

86. In August 2017, the United Nations information service in Vienna helped promote a CTBTO event at the Vienna International Centre to mark the Day that included an OmniGlobe interactive display of the International Monitoring System; an exhibit featuring panels on the history of the Semipalatinsk test site, which was provided by the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan to the United Nations in Vienna; and CTBTO information stands.

International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

87. To mark the Day, the United Nations information centre in Tokyo, jointly with the Network for the Abolition of Nuclear Weapons, a local non-governmental organization, hosted an event in September 2016 to highlight the importance of global nuclear disarmament that included a screening of *Aogiri*, a film based on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima. A panel discussion on nuclear non-proliferation followed the screening and included contributions from government representatives, survivors from Hiroshima as well as young people.

International Day of Peace

88. To commemorate the International Day of Peace in September 2017, the United Nations information office in Almaty, together with the Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and "Polygon 29 August", a local non-governmental organization, organized a thematic discussion on "Kazakhstan's path to a nuclear-free world". Focusing on nuclear non-proliferation issues, the event provided an opportunity for university students to learn about nuclear non-proliferation from subject matter

experts and share knowledge with their peers as well as participants from government, the diplomatic community and international organizations.

Other activities

89. In addition to observances of International Days, United Nations information centres continued to raise awareness of disarmament and related issues during their ongoing outreach activities.

90. In November 2017, the United Nations information centre in Canberra, together with the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate — International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons — the Austrian Embassy in Canberra and the Australian Red Cross organized a briefing on the status of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. The briefing highlighted the legal importance of the Treaty, the key role of civil society in galvanizing support for non-proliferation issues and the humanitarian issues that it galvanized in support of the Treaty.

91. The United Nations information service in Vienna helped promote the "Gebaku No Hi" event — or "Atomic Bomb Awareness" event — at the Vienna International Centre in August 2017, sharing information materials, creating multimedia content and engaging with young people on social media to raise awareness and galvanize support.

92. In March 2017, the United Nations information centre in Khartoum provided media support to the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), to organize a press conference to raise awareness on the contribution of the Government of Japan for UNMAS to support Sudan to meet its obligation under the Ottawa Treaty.

93. In June 2016, the United Nations information service in Vienna together with the United Nations Office at Vienna on the "Women in Higher Education for Peace Vienna Forum" to support the participation of women in peace-related decision-making processes, including on issues of disarmament and non-proliferation. Providing strategic communications advice and media support, the Service helped generate support and media coverage to an event that brought together more than 500 participants from around the world. The United Nations information service also worked with the United Nations Office at Vienna to co-organize a series of conversations with young people on the topic of "Ending nuclear tests: why should I care?" and promoted the "Women Scholarship for Peace: Global South", contributing to the education modules of the Scholarship with a video.

94. At a student debate and dialogue during the Hiroshima Junior International Forum in August 2016, the United Nations information centre in Tokyo briefed more than 600 students from Japan and abroad on issues related to global peace and disarmament. The event culminated with young people presenting a "Hiroshima Declaration" for world peace and sustainable development.

G. Other activities

Exhibits

95. The Department hosts an annual exhibit in New York in commemoration of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, organized by UNMAS. In April 2017, the theme of the exhibit was "20 Years of Mine Action Service" and the theme for April 2018 was "Advancing Protection, Peace and Development".

96. The Department's United Nations information service in Vienna hosted several visits by Japanese Ministers to view the exhibition "Towards a World Free of Nuclear

Weapons" at the Vienna International Centre, installed in 2014 in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Japan and the Cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese Foreign Minister visited in May 2017, during his attendance of the Preparatory Committee session for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. His successor visited in February 2018. Both visits were covered by Japanese news media and documented on social media channels of the United Nations Information Service in Vienna. Japan's State Minister for the Environment visited the exhibit in May 2018.

97. In cooperation with the Office, in August 2016, the Department's United Nations information centre in Tokyo produced two sets of poster panels to exhibit the 12 winning posters from the United Nations Poster for Peace Contest. The posters were exhibited in the Peace Boat which departed from Yokohama in August and travelled the world promoting peace issues, including the importance of disarmament and non-proliferation.

VI. Looking forward

98. The Disarmament Information Programme will continue support the Secretary-General and the High Representative in their efforts to make effective use of the resources available to be the locus of information about arms control and disarmament, and its dissemination, to educate and generate public understanding of the importance of multilateral action in this area in a factual, balanced and objective manner.

99. The Programme envisages carrying out a diverse portfolio of activities including the continuation of serial and ad hoc publications: updating and improving its website and social media presence; continuing its podcast series entitled *Disarmament Today*, supporting and promoting exhibits, conferences, and events — especially those in collaboration with Member States; facilitating the participation of civil society in disarmament-related meetings and conferences; and outreach to the general public both directly and through the media.

Annex

Status of the voluntary trust fund for the United Nations Disarmament Information Programme

I. Interim statement of financial position as at 31 December 2017[a]

	31 December 2017	*31 December 2016*
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	49 885	128 652
Investments	444 238	227 786
Voluntary contributions receivable	–	–
Other receivables	–	–
Total current assets	**494 123**	**356 438**
Non-current assets		
Investments	139 439	109 684
Other assets	–	–
Total non-current assets	**139 439**	**109 684**
Total assets	**633 562**	**466 122**
Liabilities		
Current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued payables	5 995	2 170
Employee benefits liabilities	–	–
Total current liabilities	**5 995**	**2 170**
Non-current liabilities		
Accounts payable and accrued payables	–	–
Employee benefits liabilities	–	–
Total non-current liabilities	**–**	**–**
Total liabilities	**5 995**	**2 170**
Total assets and liabilities	**627 567**	**463 952**
Net assets		
Accumulated surplus	627 567	463 952
Total net assets	**627 567**	**463 952**

II. Interim statement of financial performance for the year ended 31 December 2017[a]

	2017	*2016*
Revenue		
Voluntary contributions[b]	184 482	7 100
Investment revenue	6 313	4 208
Other exchange revenue	–	–
Total revenue	**190 795**	**11 308**
Expenses		
Employee salaries, allowances and benefits	–	–
Non-employee compensation and allowances	11 997	–
Grants and other transfers	–	–
Supplies and consumables	–	741
Travel	–	–
Other operating expenses	15 183	24 911
Other expenses	–	–
Total expenses	**27 180**	**25 652**
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	**163 615**	**(14 344)**

III. Interim statement of changes in net assets for the year ended 31 December 2017[a]

	Net assets
Net assets as at 31 December 2016	**463 952**
Change in net assets	
Surplus for the year	163 615
Total changes in net assets	**163 615**
Net assets as at 31 December 2017	**627 567**

[a] The statements were prepared in accordance with International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

[b] Includes monetary contributions, contributions in-kind, transfers and refunds to donors.
2016 — Netherlands, Thailand.
2017 — Thailand, Singapore, private donor.